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ABSTRACT

Through a special project funded by Extension Service-USDA, University of Wisconsin-Extension, tribal women developed curriculum and tested a model for programming with the purpose of enhancing the status of young tribal women. The curriculum was designed so that tribal girls could see the many career options they have, that they realize that preparation for many careers starts in high school, that each girl has special talents and characteristics, that there are disadvantages in being a teenage mother, and that there are some skills which enhance one's choices and some barriers which reduce one's choices. The project design and curriculum could be used by tribal groups in an effort to assist young tribal women to develop their potential and abilities. However, there are some general factors to consider when planning and implementing the program. This paper gives various ideas for implementing the program in other tribal communities. Topics covered are planning and implementing the program; needs for the program (i.e., space, program length and timing, resource people); staffing (i.e., part-time, full-time, selection of staff, training); programming with girls and adults; curriculum for girls; and career conferences. (NQ)

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Ideas for Using Choices & Careers; Free To Choose

A Career Development Project for Tribal Girls

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAMS
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Choices & Careers; Free to Choose
ACareer Development Project for Tribal Girls

The status of tribal women in Wisconsin and throughout the nation reveals the double burden of being a member of a minority group and a female.

Research shows that minority women earn less money, achieve a lower level of educational attainment, and have a greater number of children at an earlier age than other women.

Thus, through a special project funded by Extension Service-USDA, University of Wisconsin-Extension in cooperation with Wisconsin tribal women developed curriculum and tested a model for programming with the purpose of enhancing the status of young tribal women.

The curriculum was designed so that girls could see the many options which they have, that they would realize that they are likely to work for pay, that preparation for many careers starts in high school, that each girl has special talents and characteristics, that there are disadvantages in being a teenage mother, and that there are some skills which enhance

one's choices and some barriers which reduce one's choices.

The program was well received in Wisconsin with 473 girls participating in the program over a two year period. There are many indications that the program could be used in a variety of ways in many tribal communities. Even though each community has its own characteristics, it was found by testing the program in communities in Wisconsin that there are some general factors to consider when planning and implementing the Career Development Program for Tribal Girls.

Planning

As with any program, the initial planning process is an essential phase if the effort is to be successful. Due to the nature of the program it is appropriate to involve the following in planning:

--local education committees

--tribal councils

--tribal managers

--school personnel, such as counselors or home and school coordinators

--staff who do specific programming with youth, such as Community Health Representatives or Maternal and Child Health Aids

--women's organizations.

If such groups are involved in the initial planning, they then understand the program and are able to support it. Meetings can be held with representatives of such groups so they understand what the program is designed to accomplish and how it is to operate. Planning might focus upon the need for such a program, how it could be done, for what length of time, for what group of girls, and where it might be done.

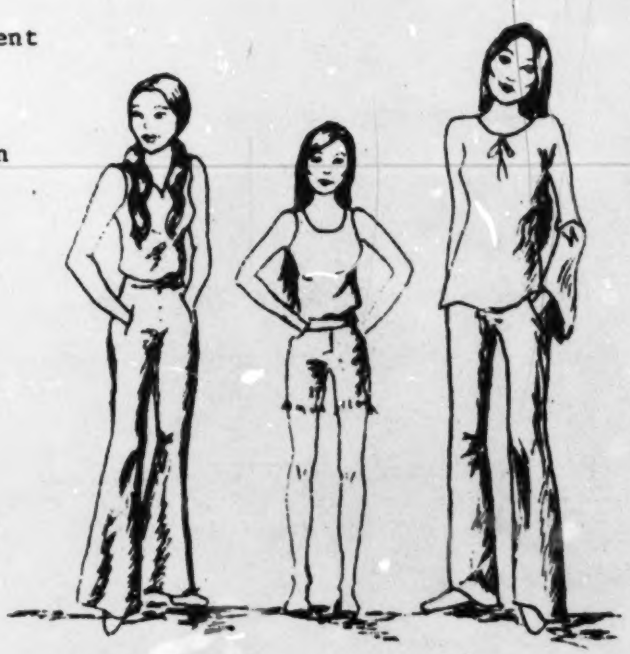
Ideas for Implementing the Program

The program has been found to be successful by using three different approaches.

--In a community setting as an out of school program.

--As part of a special summer school program.

--As part of a regular school program.



Following are some ideas for implementing the program.

--As a special interest project. Four to six weekly meetings focusing upon a part of the program, such as "Careers" or some of the units included in the section "Being a Special Person" could be held.

--A community health worker could use the units "Just for You" and "Marriage, Expectations or Reality" as they work with young women

who are heads of households.

--A Community Health Representative could use the units "Being a Special Person," "Parenting Daughters," and "Ideas for Planning" as they do health programming with parents.

--A person employed in a Title IV or JOM program could use units for individual or group sessions with students or parents.

--Some units could be used as a supplement to a 4-H project. As an example, the unit "The Outside You" could be used in conjunction with a 4-H clothing project.

--Some units could be used as a 4-H activity. For example, the units on careers could be used as the basis for a series of sessions on career development.

--The unit "Food and You" could be used by program assistants in their work with tribal groups as a supplement to the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.

--Volunteers could conduct a series of special interest classes for girls.

--An Upward Bound Program could use the units as part of their program.

--A school could use the units as part of their curriculum in social sciences, home economics, or health classes.

--A school could use the units as an addition to their regular curriculum for mini-courses or regularly scheduled courses.

--A tribal community, an extension program, or a school could employ staff to specifically implement the program. Possibilities for funding programs might be Public Service or CETA funds or funds for education programs.

What's Needed for a Program

Several ingredients are needed for a successful program, such as the following.

--Space for sessions with girls on a regular basis. If girls show up for a session and find their meeting space in use by another group, it discourages attendance.

--In many communities, it is essential to have a means for transporting girls to and from sessions. This might be accomplished by using a tribal bus or van or staff might use their own personal cars.

--The timing of a project affects a program. In the Wisconsin project these times seemed to work most effectively:

a. January to April

b. June to August

c. September to December.

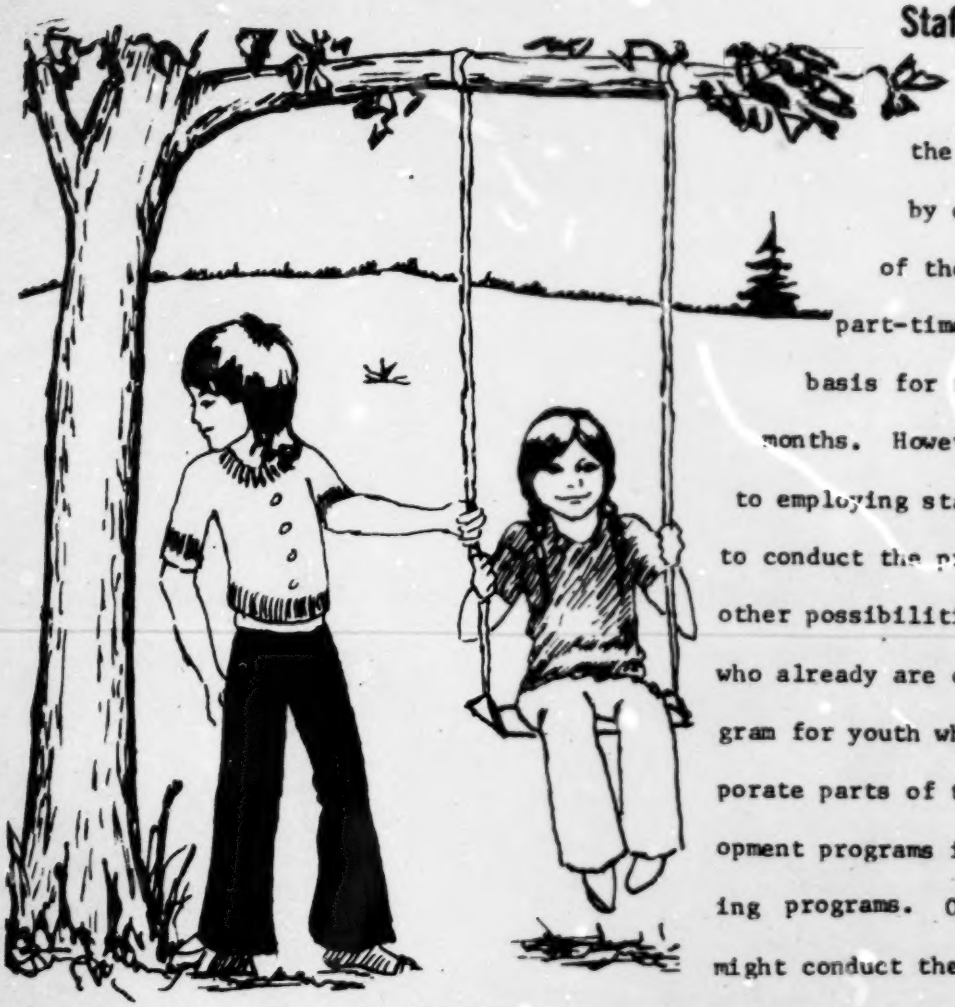
--On occasion there may already be an adequate youth program in a community, and this needs to be considered in the initial stages of planning. For example, if a community has planned an extensive summer recreation program for youth, it might be better to do the career development program in the fall.

--The length of time for which the program is done is flexible. For example, the program is designed so part of it can be used for a single two-hour session with girls to perhaps a series of 15 two-hour sessions.

—If the career development program is closely coordinated with other

youth programs, it has a greater chance for success.

--If a variety of resource people are used to conduct the program it strengthens it. Staff of various programs and tribal elders were valuable resources in conducting the Wisconsin program.



Staffing the Program

In Wisconsin the program was done by employing members of the community on a part-time or full-time basis for three to five months. However, in addition to employing staff specifically to conduct the program, there are other possibilities such as people who already are conducting a program for youth who might incorporate parts of the career development programs into their existing programs. Or volunteers might conduct the program.

If staff is employed specifically to conduct the career development program, it is helpful to consider the following when selecting them.

--That they have an understanding and liking for youth.

--The ability to be open and honest when working with youth.

--A willingness to study and prepare for group sessions with girls.

--A vehicle with which to provide transportation for program participants.

--Staff do not need a high school education in order to carry out

the job responsibilities.

--Persons of any age are able to perform the job tasks; women from 18 to 45 successfully performed the job in Wisconsin.

Based upon the Wisconsin pilot, a high turnover of staff can be expected. Fifty-five percent of the group leaders did not complete the job. However, there are some factors which can help staff carry out the job tasks. Some factors are:

--have tribal input into the recruitment and selection of staff

--have a committee of tribal people assist withthe interviewing and selection of staff

--develop means for coordination of the Career Development program with other youth or youth-related programs; preferably this is done in the planning of the program

--provide training for staff so that they understand

a. the philosophy of the program

b. the purpose of the program

c. the program operation

d. the subject matter content of the program

e. methods for working with youth.

It is also important that staff fully understand their job responsibilities at the start of the program. Training can be done in the following ways.

a. Have two to five days of intensive training for several staff at the start of the project.

b. Have individual conferences with staff on a weekly or bi-weekly basis; this aspect was found to be essential in the Wisconsin pilot.

c. Have bi-weekly staff meetings with several staff. It was found that this was the single most effective means of retaining group leaders. This peer support was most beneficial to group leaders in the Wisconsin project.

Programming with Girls

The curriculum for the Wisconsin project was designed for groups of eight to 14 girls, ages 9 to 11, 12 to 14, and 15 to 18. If the program is done in a community, the first step in implementing the program is to personally contact parents and girls, explain the program to them, and invite them to participate. When inviting them to participate, one needs to be specific about the location, time, length of sessions, and any other details. If was found that staff who made personal visits to parents and girls had a more successful program than those who relied on letters and posters, although these enhance the promotion effort.

It was found that smaller communities had a higher rate of participation than larger communities. It might be feasible to implement the program on a neighborhood basis. Or housing sites in some areas might be an appropriate basis.

Curriculum for Girls

The curriculum for girls has 16 units divided into three major parts: Being an Indian Woman, Being a Special Person, and About Careers. Each unit includes a Fact Sheet which is a summary of the unit and its concepts, and a Leader's Guide, which includes background information, objectives, and learning experiences based upon the concepts of the unit. There is a booklet for girls which contains background information and activities for girls to do. Also, included in some units are teaching aids such as games, charts, and posters.

Following is a list of units.

Section	Unit	Author	Ages
Being an Indian Woman	Traditional Roles	Carol Dodge, Menominee, Curriculum Co-Ordinator for Menominee Indian Schools	12-14 & 15-18
Being an Indian Woman	Famous Indian Women	Janet Pascale, Chippewa, GLITC Health Carcers Recruiter	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18

Being an Indian Woman	Growing Up to Be a Woman	Clara DeCoteau, Chippewa	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Growing Up	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
Being a Special Person	The Outside You	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Marriage, Expectations or Reality	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	12-14 & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Just for You	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	12-14 & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Your Money	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Food & You	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
Being a Special Person	Alcoholism	Debbie Kruger, Potowatomi, Wabeno Home & School Co-Ordinator	15-18
Being a Special Person	Coping With Parents	Debbie Kruger, Potowatomi, Wabeno Home & School Coordinator	15-18
Being a Special Person	Life Span Planning	Marian Thompson, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18
About Careers	Decision Making	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	12-14 & 15-18
About Careers	Educational Opportunities	Dale Wolf, Chippewa, faculty, Northland College	12-14 & 15-18
About Careers	Exploring Careers	Bill Gleason & Dixie Hesler, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18

About Careers	Career Opportunities	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX	9-11, 12-14, & 15-18

A variety of learning experiences are contained in the units. Following are some examples of activities which are included.

Art projects	Illustrated talks
Case studies	Interviewing
Checklists	Personal analysis
Debates	Problem-solving
Discussions	Role playing
Dramatics	Slides
Games	Writing
Quizzes	

It was found that girls particularly enjoyed it when a variety of learning experiences were used and that none of the activities were unpopular.

An instructor and/or girls can select various concepts and learning experiences they wish to deal with from within a unit. It was found that a unit can be covered in from two to ten hours, depending upon the interest of the group and the time available.

The curriculum was designed for use with a group of eight to 14 girls, and this seems to be a satisfactory size for groups. Also, a program can be developed for a single session that could last for two hours to perhaps 15 two-hour sessions. The units are designed so that each unit can be used independently or two or more units can be used to focus upon a special area of interest.

When using the curriculum, it is helpful to keep in mind that it

attempts to deal with attitudes as well as information so many learning experiences are designed to promote discussion and thinking rather than a clear cut, right or wrong answer.

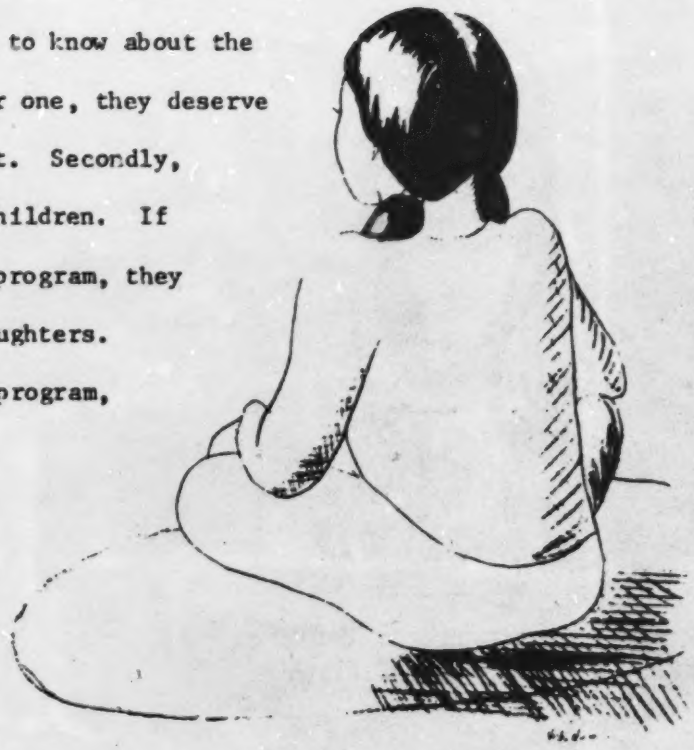
Career Conference

Career conferences conducted for girls from several communities and/or tribes were found to be an effective means of reinforcing the concepts of the program. Following are some ideas for conducting a career conference.

1. Have girls help plan and decide upon a theme.
2. Invite tribal women to give key-note addresses and lead discussions groups.
3. Invite women who are tribal elders to discuss their growing up days with small groups of girls.
4. Invite representatives of universities, colleges, or vocational schools to present displays and talks on their institutions.
5. Invite women involved in various careers to give talks or have exhibits about their careers.
6. Have the girls present part of the program. They might want to do skits, give talks, or show art work which they made as part of the project. Girls will have good ideas on this.
7. Get-acquainted games at the beginning of the program help girls relax from traveling and set the stage for a friendly day.

8. It is better to have separate conferences for girls ages 9 to 11 and 12 to 18.

Programming with Adults



It is important for parents to know about the program for several reasons. For one, they deserve to know that the program is about. Secondly, parents are educators of their children. If they know the main ideas of the program, they too can share them with their daughters. Also, parents can help with the program, thus making it stronger.

Similarly, it is important that other people in a community who work with young girls are familiar with the content of the program. When others know and understand the main ideas of the program they are then in a position to share and reinforce such ideas with girls.

Based upon the Wisconsin experience it was found that these activities are possibilities for working with adults.

1. Make home visits to parents to explain the program.
2. Meet individually or in group sessions with other people who work with girls in order to explain the program.
3. Have community people serve as resource people or as guest speakers for sessions with girls.

4. Have a community meeting for adults in order to explain the program.

5. Have the girls who participate in the program present a community program where they present different activities such as skits, talks, or slides, as means of explaining what they have learned in the program.

Also curriculum has been developed for adults which is based upon the units for girls. The curriculum can be used with groups of parents or others who work with girls as a means of dealing with the concepts of the program. The units for adults contain an activity section which parents or others can do together with young girls.

Following is a brief description of units which were developed for adults.

Unit	Author
Women Today & Tomorrow	Cathaleen Finley, UWEX
Parenting Daughters	Delores Wolf, Chippewa, teacher, Ashland High School; and Cathaleen Finley, UWEX.
About Careers	Marian Thompson, UWEX
Being an Indian Woman	Lois Strong, Oneida
Being a Special Person	Cathaleen Finley and Marilyn Thompson, UWEX
Ideas for Planning	Lois Strong, Oneida

Summary

It appears that the project design and the curriculum could be used by tribal groups in an effort to assist young tribal women to develop their potential and abilities. As one tribal elder, who served as a member of the advisory committee, said,

> . . . I feel that it is really a fine program, it is beautiful, and I think it is the kind of program that every mother would encourage and that every mother would be happy to have her daughter attend.

And one young tribal woman who wrote some curriculum and was employed as a group leader said

> . . . I guess since I'm working as a home/school coordinator I've seen girls who I've thought had potential. But they seemed to think that what everyone did was have children or get married, and so these were their choices; and they would drop out of school and have children. Their potential was just not utilized at all and I thought that this was really sad, both for them and for the community. I hope that, through this program, that this will change.